Fulbright Greets Liberty Lobby With a Barely Suppressed Yawn

2/18/67

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Sen. J. William Fulbright (D-Ark.) confronted the Liberty Lobby yesterday with a barely suppressed yawn.

Each took their leave obviously convinced the other could prove America's ruination.

The confrontation took place over the consular treaty awaiting Senate ratification. Liberty Lobby, which calls itself "a patriotic pressure group" and Fulbright "freedom's Judas goat," turned up to protest.

The Lobby has been spearheading a campaign against the treaty and this week began running newspaper ads in 26 states, urging its downfall.

W. B. Hicks, executive secretary for the Lobby, charged that the treaty was a "blank check" for Soviet spies and an invitation to Russia to import anything, "from narcotics to A-bombs," in the United States under cover of diplomatic immunity.

Chairman Fulbright reacted like a scientist looking through a microscope. He challenged Liberty Lobby not for what it said but how it said it. Earlier in the day, Sen. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.) had complained that the anti-treaty ads in some Missouri newspapers gave the impression that Symington endorsed their views.

"I think that shows how fast people read," Hicks replied, insisting that no careful reader could have gotten that impression.

"You mean it shows how easily fooled they are," Fulbright said. "You're a past master at that, aren't you?"

Hicks denied it. The ads, some of them mentioning Liberty Lobby only deep in the text, display Senators' names prominently and urged readers in each state to "help" them by sending anti-treaty letters.

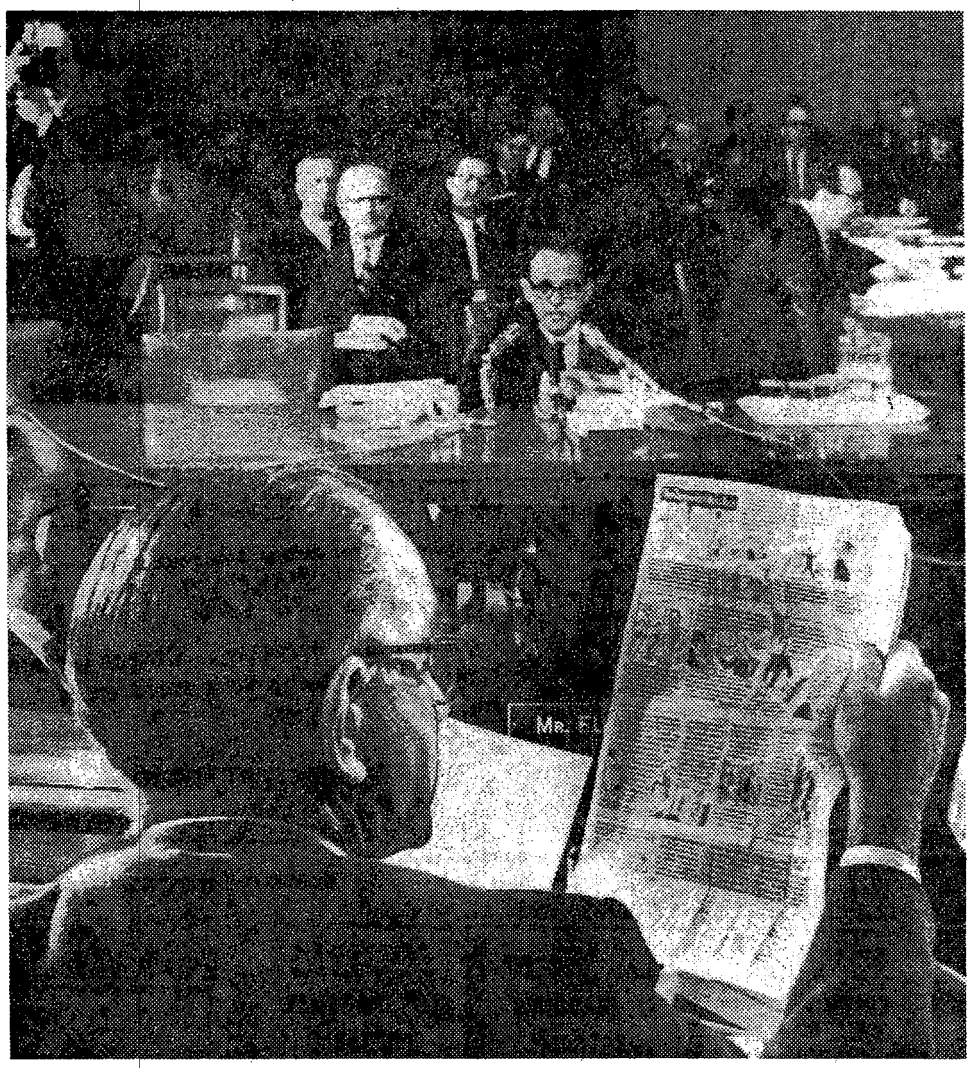
The chairman showed what he thought of it all by leaving the room as Hicks proceeded to give Liberty Lobby's views on the consular treaty. But Hicks said later that he couldn't blame the chairman for leaving early.

"If he had his way, the treaty wouldn't even be before the committee," Hicks declared. "He feels he's faced with a world full of idiots."

The rest of the day-long hearing was marked by brief tiffs and lengthy statements. Georgetown University Professor Lev E. Dobriansky, chairman of the Captive Nations Committee, charged that the treaty is a "pitiful product . . . a diplomatic denigration of the national status" of such areas as Dobriansky's ancestral homeland, the Ukraine.

Sen. Karl E. Mundt (R-S.D.) said: "It looks to me very much like somebody has been suckered into something . . . Why are we so interested in strengthening the power of the Communists that are killing our American boys?"

In a related development, Sen. Margaret Chase Smith (R-Maine) said yesterday that the State Department has indicated that it is not willing to wait for a cease-fire in Vietnam before putting the consular treaty into effect.



By Wally McNamee, Staff Photographer

AD EXAMINED—Sen. J. William Fulbright of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, in foreground, questions W. B. Hicks Jr. of Liberty Lobby about an ad placed in a Missouri newspaper which led Sen. Stuart Symington (D-Mo.) to complain earlier that it led people to believe he supported the lobby's view.